

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, Michael J. Grote, Special Agent (SA) of the U.S. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Cleveland, Ohio, also hereinafter referred to as the "Affiant," being first duly sworn, depose and state as follows:

**INTRODUCTION**

1. I am currently employed as a Special Agent of the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). I am a graduate of the Criminal Investigator Training Program at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center at Glynco, Georgia. I have received additional law enforcement training (Immigration Officer Basic Training Program 1998) at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and with the Huron County Sheriff's Office (Correction Officer Academy 1997). I have held other positions in Law Enforcement as an Immigration Inspector with the Immigration and Naturalization Service, a Customs and Border Protection Officer (CBPO), and a Deputy Sheriff/Corrections Officer with the Huron County Sheriff's Office in Norwalk, Ohio. I have a total of 20 years law enforcement experience. I am a graduate of Bluffton University with a double major in Criminal Justice and Sociology and was the Outstanding Scholar of both programs.

2. I am an "Investigative or Law Enforcement Officer" of the United States within the meaning of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2510(7), and am empowered by law to conduct investigations and to make arrests for offenses enumerated in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2516. I also am empowered under Title 19, United States Code, Section 1589a to serve any warrant under the authority of the United States and make warrantless felony arrests for any crime against the United States. I also am a Customs Officer as defined by Title 19 of the United States Code, and am authorized to conduct warrantless searches at the United States Border or the Functional Equivalent of the United States Border.

3. I have received specialized training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Facility, located in Glynco, Georgia, regarding the identification of narcotic substances and the operation

of drug trafficking organizations. As part of my training, I have received specialized instruction about narcotics, narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and various techniques for investigating persons and organizations engaged in this unlawful conduct. I have participated on search warrants and have executed search warrants which have resulted in the seizure of illegal drugs and evidence of drug violations.

4. This Affidavit is submitted in support of a criminal complaint against James F. HALPIN and Grace A. BOSWORTH aka STEINKE.

5. Because this affidavit is submitted for the limited purpose of supporting a criminal complaint, I have not included each and every fact known concerning this investigation. I have set forth only the facts I believe necessary to establish probable cause that HALPIN and BOSWORTH have committed violations of Title 18, United States Code, Section 545, Smuggling; Title 21, United States Code, Section 952, Illegal Importation of a Controlled Substance; and Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846, Conspiracy to Possess with the Intent to Distribute a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of an analogue of N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-piperidinyl] propanamide; also known as Fentanyl, a schedule II controlled substance.

6. Based upon my training and experience and discussions with other agents and law enforcement officers concerning the distribution of controlled substances, I am aware that Fentanyl, Fentanyl analogues, and other commonly abused drugs are being mailed from China, Hong Kong, and other foreign countries and that Internationally mailed parcels provides traceability and reliable delivery. Your affiant is also aware that Fentanyl, Fentanyl analogues, and other commonly abused drugs mailed from China, Hong Kong, and other foreign countries are often mailed to Mexico and Canada, prior to entering the United States, by mail and other border smuggling methods. Further, the expected timeliness of International Mailing Parcels places time pressures on law enforcement agents to identify, search and deliver these drug parcels in a timely manner. Further, tracking of international parcels is difficult due to law enforcement agent's limited tracking capabilities associated with foreign parcels.

7. In May 2017 with the approval of the U.S. Attorney's Office, Cleveland, Ohio, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Special Agent Grote hereinafter referred as your affiant,

United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) Inspectors and supported by Customs and Border Protection Office of Field Operation (CBP) operating as a part of the Border Enforcement Security Taskforce (BEST) were tasked with identifying fentanyl vendors operating in the United States by making undercover purchases using an account on a dark web<sup>1</sup> marketplace (hereinafter Dark Website #1<sup>2</sup>). . The objective of these purchases is to identify the domestic source and disrupt international suppliers. BEST efforts focus on identification and seizure of dangerous drugs such as fentanyl, molly, and spice coming from foreign countries.

8. In May 2017, USPIS/HSI identified a Dark Website #1 username (hereinafter Username #1) as a level 2 vendor of fentanyl with a trust level of 5. Username #1's profile indicated the user has been a member of Dark Website #1 since July 29, 2016. Username #1's store on Dark Website #1 identified the following items for sale:

- 10mg of Fentanyl HCL 98% purity \$20 + \$35 for Express-1 days shipping – 43 sold since Feb 20, 2017
- 50mg of Fentanyl HCL 98% purity \$55 + \$35 for Express-1 days shipping – 40 sold since Feb 21, 2017
- 100mg of Fentanyl HCL 98% purity \$105 + \$35 for Express-1 days shipping – 36 sold since Feb 21, 2017
- 250mg of Fentanyl HCL 98% purity \$230 + \$35 for Express-1 days shipping – 23 sold since Feb 21, 2017.

9. On May 30, 2017, USPIS/HSI conducted an undercover purchase of 100mg of Fentanyl HCL 98% purity \$105 + \$35 for Express-1 days shipping from Username #1 on Dark Website #1 listing an undercover name and address (hereinafter Undercover Identity #1) located in the Northern District of Ohio. On May 31, 2017, PI Green received U.S. Express Mail parcel #EL318971432US addressed to Undercover Identity #1 bearing return address A.P. Schweitzer, 339 Lindsey St. Newport, KY 41071. The parcel was mailed on May 30, 2017 from the

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<sup>1</sup> The "dark web" refers to World Wide Web content that exists on darknets, overlay networks which use the Internet but require specific software, configurations or authorization to access. Traffic on the dark web is commonly redirected and encrypted to mask the true users' identity.

<sup>2</sup> The specific marketplace is intentionally not named herein but is known to your affiant as a website on the dark web that exists predominantly to facilitate the buying and selling of illegal narcotics.

Newport, KY 41071 Post Office. PI Green identified a white substance inside a clear plastic baggie which was concealed in a magazine. Cuyahoga County Forensic Lab identified the substance as .09 grams of Furanylfentanyl, fentanyl pharmacophore, and carfentanyl mixture. Your affiant is aware that these substances are analogues of N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-piperidinyl] propanamide; also known as Fentanyl, a schedule II controlled substance

10. Cincinnati Postal Inspector K. O'Neill conducted label sequencing on Express #EL318971432US and identified the four other associated mailings from the Norwood, Ohio 45212 Post Office on May 31, 2017. These mailings bore nearly identical characteristics including the same return name and address as the package shipped to Undercover Identity #1. The packages were each sent to a different state in the United States.

11. On May 31, 2017, Cincinnati Postal Inspector K. O'Neill obtained information through Interviews, was advised that James HALPIN who is known to reside at a specific address (hereinafter "Address #1") in Cincinnati, Ohio, routinely received mail shipments from International parcels and that he regularly mailed items out to domestic addresses all over the country. Further investigation resulted in the identification of Grace A. Steinke (Grace BOSWORTH). It was discovered that BOSWORTH also resides at the same address as HALPIN. BOSWORTH's (Steinke's) leased Mercedes has been observed parked in front of that address.

12. Approximately 40 mailings with similar characteristics were identified by Postal Inspector (PI) O'Neill as having been sent from three different Post Offices in or near Cincinnati, Ohio.

13. On June 6, 2017, PI O'Neill was reviewing Priority Mail Express parcels at the Norwood Post Office, Cincinnati, Ohio and located Priority Mail Express International parcel label number EG035904426CA (SUBJECT PARCEL) addressed to Dustin Briggs at HALPIN and BOSWORTH's address. The package originated from Montreal QC. PI O'Neill obtained the parcel for further investigation.

14. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Task Force Officer Shannon Taylor was contacted to arrange for a narcotic canine to check the SUBJECT PARCEL. DEA Task Force Officer Shannon Taylor responded to the Cincinnati Postal Inspection Service office, Cincinnati,

Ohio where the SUBJECT PARCEL was placed in a controlled area and presented to narcotic canine, "Sadie". "Sadie" alerted positively to the presence or odor of a controlled substance or their proceeds or instrumentalities upon the SUBJECT PARCEL.

15. The SUBJECT PARCEL was further identified as follows: an Xpresspost cardboard envelope approximately 12" x 9 1/2" in size, bearing label number EG035904426CA, postmarked June 3, 2017.

16. On June 6, 2017, PI O'Neill obtained a Federal Search Warrant for International Express Mail parcel label number EG035904426CA (SUBJECT PACKAGE) and opened the package. Once the package was opened, approximately 5 grams (total package weight) of a white powdery substance inside two orange plastic baggies were located. The Hamilton County Coroner's Lab confirmed the total package weight was approximately 5 grams and the white powdery substance was a mixture of fentanyl, Carfentanil (carfentanyl), and furanylfentanyl.

17. On June 6, 2017, PI Bryon Green and your affiant reviewed handwriting examples which included BOSWORTH's aka STEINKE's handwriting. After comparing documents to include divorce filing that included BOSWORTH's aka STEINKE's and associated Express Mail labels, including #EL318971432US, it is the Agents' lay opinion that BOSWORTH aka STEINKE's handwriting is on the parcel labels.

18. On June 7, 2017, James HALPIN and Grace BOSWORTH's vehicles were identified in the morning hours at a business address in Cincinnati, Ohio (hereinafter "Address #2"). At approximately 12:48PM, HALPIN came into the Cincinnati 45212 Post Office and recovered Canadian Xpresspost #EG035904426CA, containing 5 grams of fentanyl, carfentanyl, and furanylfentanyl mixture, and mailed 3 parcels out to various addresses in the United States, including Express Mail parcel #EK715436096US addressed to Undercover #1 and bearing the same name and return address as the packages identified above. . Prior to entering the Post Office, HALPIN was observed placing mail in a blue collection box in the parking lot of the post office. Subsequently PI O'Neill retrieved the mailings which included one envelope bearing the same hand writing and return address as the suspect parcels mailed inside. HALPIN was subsequently detained by Law Enforcement. During a search of HALPIN, a small portion of untested fentanyl in a Camel snuff can was discovered on his person.

19. During a mirandized interview before Law Enforcement, HALPIN admitted to mailing approximately 30 to 35 parcels that contained 50-100mg quantities of Fentanyl each. HALPIN advised that the parcels were packaged by Grace BOSWORTH and then he was sent to the post office to mail the drug parcels to customers. PI O'Neill informed HALPIN that Law Enforcement had evidence of 40 mailings in the form of postal receipts. HALPIN stated that he couldn't believe he had mailed that many. HALPIN said BOSWORTH would give him the parcels already packaged and ready to go. HALPIN claimed that he never watched BOSWORTH package the drugs, but estimated that each drug parcel contained 50-100mg. HALPIN concluded, 50-100mg of Fentanyl was the common amount that customers would normally purchase. HALPIN said he started mailing in March. HALPIN stated he mailed the Parcels from various Post Office locations in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area. HALPIN stated that he was told the location he was to mail the drug parcels from by Grace BOSWORTH. HALPIN said he and BOSWORTH went to Newport, Kentucky, last week for the first time because they had to go to court where he mailed 5 drug parcels from the Post Office. He admitted to receiving Canadian Packages weekly since of March of 2017, that contained 2 grams or more of Fentanyl. He said he did not open the Canadian Parcels, but rather gave them to BOSWORTH after he picked them up from the Post Office. HALPIN claimed that BOSWORTH conducted the purchases of Fentanyl and sales of Fentanyl by computer. HALPIN claimed that he had no knowledge about that. HALPIN admitted that BOSWORTH asked him to buy bitcoin for her after her account was shut down. HALPIN started buying bitcoin for her while he lived in Connecticut beginning in December of 2015. He stated he moved in with BOSWORTH in September 2016 at her residence in Cincinnati. He said he did make Bitcoin purchases for her until his account was shut down last year. HALPIN claimed that he did not use fentanyl prior to meeting BOSWORTH, and advised he had back pain. He stated that BOSWORTH introduced him to Fentanyl and claimed that it would help him with his pain. HALPIN stated that BOSWORTH gave him FENTANYL daily and that she would administer it to him from a camel snuff can, which contained plastic baggie. HALPIN advised that BOSWORTH used Fentanyl daily.

20. On June 7, 2017, Bureau of Criminal Investigations (BCI) SA Doug Eveslage, assigned as an Agent with the Drug Abuse Reduction Task Force in the Greater Cincinnati area applied for and received Search Warrants for Address #1 and Address #2.



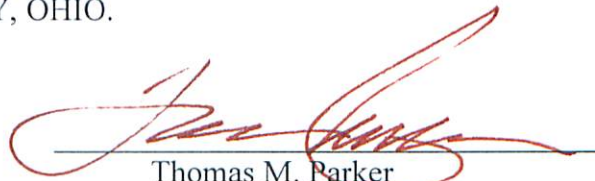
21. On June 7, 2017, Search Warrants for Address #1, and Address #2, Hamilton County, Ohio were executed. As a result of the Search Warrant at Address #1, Agents located approximately 10 Postal Mailing receipts located in the garbage can outside of the residence that were consistent with the other drug mailings. During the search of Address #2, a purse containing BOSWORTH'S belongings and believed to belong to her were 7 orange baggies with a white powder substance believed to be fentanyl and 2 orange baggies with an unknown brown substance. Also recovered from behind BOSWORTH'S desk was a digital scale with white residue, more than 200 clear 2"x3" plastic baggies and a blank Priority Express Mail label. In your Affiant's experience, these items are all consistent with and are commonly used in the distribution of narcotics including fentanyl analogues as described herein.

22. According to BCI SA Doug Eveslage, Grace BOSWORTH was located at Address #2. A search of a black bag found in the suite with BOSWORTH was performed and the bag was found to contain a camel snuff can. Inside the can were (suspected) untested fentanyl mixtures in small orange zip lock baggies. The orange zip lock baggies were identical to the orange baggies contained in Canadian Xpresspost parcel #EG035904426CA which was delivered to James HALPIN earlier in the day.



Michael J. Grote Jr.  
Special Agent  
Homeland Security Investigations

SWORN AND SUBSCRIBED TO BEFORE ME THIS 8th DAY OF JUNE, 2017, AT CLEVELAND, CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO.



Thomas M. Parker  
United States Magistrate Judge